

ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE  
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, 5/10/2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Marlon Alaan, Mary Ellen Barkman, Teresa Dean, Ernesto Monroy, Norman Schlact, Shamsah Shidi, Maryellen Sullivan, Tricia Trinke

PROGRAM FACULTY: Rebecca Kramer (Program Director)  
Mary Hanlon, Barb Heier, Marja Beaufait,  
Dana Hamilton (PTA Staff Assistant)

MEETING TIME: 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM

I. Introductions

Those present introduced themselves and indicated their current place of employment.

II. Program Updates

On May 8, 2012 the PTA Program graduated 22 students. Two students anticipate graduating in July 2012, they have all general education/support courses met and will complete their last clinical course in June. This class initially began in the fall of 2010 with 44 students, the graduation rate for this class is 54.5%.

There are 22 freshmen. This class initially began with 40 students in August of 2011. If all students are retained by May of next year, this class will have a graduation rate of 55%.

Students are dropping out for many reasons: family emergencies, personal health issues, employment work hours and the rigors of the program (including taking general education and support courses in addition to their PTA courses). Students are given information on program requirements and difficulties they may encounter before entering (Program webpage, information sessions, counseling sessions with advisors) but do not seem to reflect on and develop strategies for when these barriers arise.

Becky and Dana researched a sampling of graduation rates from other PTA Programs in both Florida and the US and reported their findings: College of Central Florida (Ocala) 54%, Indian River

State College 57%, State College of Florida (Manatee) 73%. Most PTA Programs appeared in the 55% - 75% range with some above 75% and some below 55%. Teresa Dean, as a CAPTE reviewer and member of the Commission, stated this is what she sees nationally as well - most programs in the 55% - 75% range with some in the 30% and others in the 80% range.

SPC will be hosting the IER PTA exam review prep course May 8<sup>th</sup>. All SPC PTA students are registered to attend.

### III. Program Admission Interviews

Becky explained the Rubric for the new admission interviews, now a required part of the admissions process for the program. The first group of interviews will be held May 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm. The interviewee will be scored in 6 areas:

- Appearance & Communication,
- Team Skills
- Participation
  - Leadership & Maturity
  - Listening & Respecting
- Writing Skills
- Spelling & Grammar
  - Organization & Content.

The Committee discussed possible interviewee questions and procedures for carrying out the interviews. Suggestions included: Each person picks a card and the group responds with a collaborative answer. Facilitator reads a question and each individual responds with their answer. A case scenario was suggested regarding how the student will handle childcare, work and personal issues while going through this program. Mary Ellen Barkman suggested a group activity could be putting something uncommon in a paper bag. The group can feel the object through the bag then has to come up with 3 questions to ask to determine what the object is. The general consensus was the rubric and interview process was coming together effectively. Mary Ellen Barkman offered to assist with the interviews on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

Action: PTA faculty will meet next week to review committee feedback and finalize activities for the group interviews.

### IV. Program Equipment

Becky informed Committee members the program had purchased a Bariatric Table and would be receiving it soon. She asked if any members have seen or purchased any new equipment the PTA Program should be

considering for the purpose of training students. Maryellen Sullivan's clinic has an Alter G Treadmill and explained how it worked. It is a body unweighting system that they are very happy to have and are using with many patients, mostly private pay clients.

Becky related the HEC provost will not renew the Cerner program that was originally purchased to use at the Health Center as an interdisciplinary electronic documentation system. The PTA Program will therefore need to purchase documentation software so students can learn how to navigate and document in electronic charts. Shamsah and Tricia offered to research some programs, Theresa Dean suggested Optima, Mary Hanlon suggested Connect. Mary Ellen Barkman suggested looking for software that is able to accommodate Medicare changes as they occur. Maryellen Sullivan suggested looking into a company donating the software. At the conclusion of the discussion Mary Ellen Barkman mentioned, and everyone agreed, that it is the process the students need to know, not necessarily the program. Advisory committee members gave their approval for purchase of a documentation software program that will assist in training PTA students on accessing medical electronic records and documenting physical therapy services in them.

Action: PTA faculty will spend time looking at different vendors electronic documentation systems at APTA's national conference in Tampa this June.

#### V. PT Labor Market Data

Becky gave statistics from the Florida Research and Economic Information Database on the labor market data for PTA's in the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater area. The advisory board was in agreement that the salary information was on the high side and more indicative of those in the skilled nursing setting. Outpatient salaries would be more in line with somewhere between entry level and mean wage.

#### VI. Announcements

Shamsah Shidi announced completion of her tDPT and was congratulated by all.

Becky announced that FPTA President Sheila Nicholson spoke to Florida Blue and First Coast about concerns regarding billing, specifically the payers perception of growing physical therapy claims that appear to be fraudulent. Florida Blue and First Coast would like FPTA to develop

educational programming for its members to ensure they are aware of the proper process for filing claims and supporting documentation to avoid denials. FPTA is sending out post cards to invite people to a “did you know”/social event with the goal of providing members education in fraud, prepayment, probes, documentation and reformed payment. Sheila asked for suggestions for key phrases to put on the post cards that would motivate attendance. Committee members indicated program titles such as “Dialog with Florida Blue and First Coast” “Dialog with physical therapy payers” or “Help us create dialog with Florida Blue and First Coast”.

Action: Becky to forward suggestions to Sheila.

Committee members were in agreement to meet after dinner during the fall’s Joint Advisory Committee meeting on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> rather than the usual November meeting.